



CONNECTICUT AFL-CIO

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Testimony of the Connecticut AFL-CIO before the Labor and Public Employees Committee

February 17th, 2015

Senator Winfield, Representative Tercyak and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee,

I am Lori Pelletier and I serve as the Executive Secretary- Treasurer of the Connecticut AFL-CIO. I am here to testify on behalf of the 900 affiliated local unions who represent 200,000 working men and women from every city and town in our great state as follows:

Proposed S.B. No. 446 AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFINITION OF THE TERM "DOMESTIC WORKER". (LAB)

We support this proposed legislation. Attached is a resolution passed unanimously at our convention last year

We appreciate the committee holding this public hearing.

Respectfully,

Lori J. Pelletier

Executive Secretary- Treasurer, Connecticut AFL-CIO

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RESOLUTION 6

SUPPORT DOMESTIC WORKERS

WHEREAS, a domestic worker is someone who works within their employer's household performing a variety of household services including care for children and elderly dependents to cleaning and household maintenance;

WHEREAS, there are over 52 million domestic workers in the world, 2.5 million in the US, and over 60,000 in CT;

WHEREAS, domestic workers have historically been viewed as outside the traditional workforce, largely because most are women, often immigrants, doing the work most often done by housewives and servants at home;

WHEREAS, due to the nature of domestic work, these workers are isolated from the rest of the workforce and subjected to round-the-clock physically demanding labor, often with little or no clear separation between work and personal time;

WHEREAS, this is an unregulated industry that was intentionally excluded from coverage by federal labor laws, including the Fair Labor Standards Act, National Labor Relations Act, Family Medical Leave Act, and the Occupational Safety and Health Act;

WHEREAS, domestic workers are among the most vulnerable to abuse and mistreatment of all workers, since their workplaces typically are not subject to any laws regulating job safety, wage and hour standards, or protections against discrimination, including sexual harassment;

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WHEREAS, domestic worker legislation is designed to protect domestic workers' basic workplace rights and is also good for employers and their families and for the state and its workforce;

WHEREAS, in 2014, there was introduced in the Labor Committee HB 5527 AAC Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, that would amend Connecticut state labor law to guarantee basic work standards and protections including 24 hours off per 7-day calendar week; meal and rest breaks; limited vacation and sick days; parental leave; protection from discrimination, sexual harassment, illegal charges for food and lodging, and eviction without notice; unemployment benefits; notice of termination; and a means of enforcing these standards;

WHEREAS, in 2014, the Labor Committee, while moved by the testimony of several Connecticut domestic workers, passed a bill which then went on to pass overwhelmingly in both the House and Senate, creating a Task Force to study the needs of this community of workers and develop legislation for future years;

WHEREAS, New York enacted a Domestic Worker Bill of Rights in 2010; Hawaii passed theirs in June 2013; California's passed in September 2013, and Massachusetts has a bill that has passed their House and Senate and going to conference committee;

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THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the Connecticut AFL-CIO will actively support and work with its affiliates to ensure that this Task Force is developed and implemented as the legislation requires and results in serious recommendations for state labor law reform that will protect domestic workers at work;

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that when the Task Force completes its work in October of 2015, the Connecticut AFL-CIO will actively support its legislative recommendations.

Submitted by: UAW Region 9A CAP Council

Convention Action: APPROVE REJECT

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